

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
BIRD RECORDS  
JUNE - AUGUST, 1995

Sept. 04, 1995

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period June 1 - August 31. I've compiled only those observations for species which are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A **"?-summer"** indicates a species on the checklist but not for the summer season. Many of the observations from mid-August on can be considered early migrants and the status reported for those species is for the Fall season.

As you can see from the list, it has been a relatively quiet summer season with regard to unexpected or unusual species. Weather patterns were not out of the usual either, if the past few dry summers can be considered "usual". June began with a continuation of the dry spring season experienced through April and most of May. Mid-June brought some relief with several good afternoon and evening storms, but by the end of the month the rains had given way to high temperatures and dry, hot winds. The Chisos Basin received three inches of rain during June whereas Castolon had less than an inch. July continued the trend, only drier, with none of the five park rain gauges recording more than an inch (Panther Junction was highest with 0.79 inches). The month of August brought better rainfall, the Chisos Basin recording 1.33 inches and Persimmon Gap recording 2.12 inches (1.9 inches in one one-hour storm!). As stated in the spring '95 report, any locality with water was a focal point for birds and birders; the moister canyons in the high Chisos, Rio Grande Village, Cottonwood campground, Sam Nail ranch and Dugout Wells.

Early in June there were still a few migrant species trickling through, the most unusual of which being a **black-throated green warbler** reported on June 10 at Sam Nail Ranch. Late June observations of a **common black-hawk** (6/25) and a **green-tailed towhee** (6/24) were also unusual. The late date hints at possible breeding but no evidence of nesting was reported. There are no confirmed nesting reports for the hawk in the park (in 1976 a common black-hawk was observed in the Chisos Basin from June to August), and there is only one report of a nesting green-tailed towhee (1936-Smith, from Wauer). Another unusual late June observation was a **male white-eared hummingbird** in Laguna Meadow on 6/24. As before, there are no nesting records for this species in the park.

July was quiet for the most part, but did have a few noteworthy observations towards the end of the month. Migrant rufous hummingbirds began showing up at feeders around the 24th, skirmishing with the black-chins and Lucifers. Several species of migrant shorebirds (lesser yellowlegs, long-billed curlew, upland sandpiper) began showing up along the Rio Grande during the final week of the month. An early migrant **Louisiana waterthrush** at San Nail Ranch on the 31st complemented a single sighting earlier this year in spring. Zimmer and Emanuel had an excellent day at Rio Grande Village on the 30th when they observed and photographed a lone **thick-billed kingbird**. Thick-bills have not been reported in the park since 1991 when a pair nested at Cottonwood campground and a second pair was reported nest building at Rio Grande Village. The last confirmed successful fledgling of young was in 1990 at Cottonwood.

August continued the trend of early arriving migrants. Great Blue herons increased in number along the river, and cattle egrets began moving through in small flocks. Five immature **tricolored herons** on the 14th near Cottonwood campground provided Stuart and Karen Sparkman with a noteworthy observation. Shorebirds observed included lesser yellowlegs, solitary sandpipers, spotted sandpipers, one **western sandpiper** and one **Wilson's phalarope**. A river trip by park employees yielded a lone **roseate spoonbill**, the only report for this year. Other highlights for August included three male **ruby-throated hummingbirds** at feeders in the Panther Junction residence area for a period of nearly two weeks, Chuck Sexton's observation of an early female **black-throated green warbler** in the high Chisos and single report of a **red-faced warbler** near Boot Springs by the Sparkmans. Other early arriving migrant warblers included yellow, yellow-rumped, black-throated gray, Townsend's, hermit, and Wilson's. Colima warblers were still present through August, though in reduced numbers.

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<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>	<u>PARK STATUS</u>
Tricolored Heron	5	imm.8/14	Cottonwood Camp	S&K Sparkman	rare
Black-crowned night-heron	2	imm.8/04	Rio Grande Vill. settling ponds	Mark Flippo	rare
	1	imm.8/11	Rio Grande Vill.	Chuck Sexton	
	1	ad. 8/31	Rio Grande Vill.	L&B deMarch	
Yellow-crowned night-heron	1	imm.8/11	Rio Grande Vill.	Chuck Sexton	unc.
Roseate Spoonbill	1	8/20	Rio Grande San Vincente area	R.Skiles C.Sperling	acc
Common black-hawk	1	6/03	Rio Grande Vill.	Mel White	? summer
	1	6/25	Santa Elena Cyn.	Barry Lyon	? summer
Zone-tailed hawk	1	8/31	Boquillas Cyn.	L&B deMarch	unc.
Western sandpiper	1	8/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare
Wilson's phalarope	1	8/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo	rare
Upland sandpiper	1	7/30	Rio Grande Vill.	B.Zimmer & V.Emanuel	unc mig.
White-eared hummingbird	1*	6/24	Laguna Meadow	B.Lyon & V.Emanuel	acc
● Not accepted by TBRC.					
Ruby-throated hummingbird	3	8/18-30	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	rare
Green kingfisher	1	6/11	Rio Grande Vill.	C.Vogren	rare
	1	8/31	Rio Grande Vill.	B.deMarch	rare
Brown-crested flycatcher	2	6/01	Rio Grande Vill.	John Gee	rare breeder
	1	6/09	" "	Carol Edwards	
	1	6/24	" "	Mark Flippo	
Thick-billed kingbird	1*	7/30	" "	B.Zimmer & V.Emanuel	acc breeder
● No record of TBRC action 12/05/00					
Carolina wren	1	8/12	Rio Grande Vill.	Chuck Sexton	rare
Black-capped vireo	1	6/01	Window Trail	J&C Jones	rare breeder
	1	6/17	" "	David Flynt	
	1	7/28	" "	B.Zimmer &	

V.Emanuel

Warbling vireo	1	6/03	Boot Canyon	J.Gee & C.Edwards	sporadic
Nashville warbler	1	6/02	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo	late mig.
Black-throated green warbler	1	6/10	Sam Nail Ranch	Bryan Tilley ?	summer late mig.
	1	8/09	Pinnacles trail	Chuck Sexton	acc.
Louisiana waterthrush	1	7/31	" "	Mark Flippo	acc early mig.
Red-faced warb.	1*	8/13	Boot Springs	S&K Sparkman	sporadic
● Accepted by TBRC					
Painted redstart	1	7/29	Boot Springs	B.Zimmer	sporadic breeder
Indigo Bunting	2	6/01	Rio Grande Vill.	J&C Jones	rare
	1	6/02	Window Trail	J&C Jones	
Green-tailed Towhee	1	6/24	Laguna Meadow	F.Rowland	? summer

\*Review species; report sent to TBRC:Lasley

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK  
BIRD RECORDS  
SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER, 1995

December 08, 1995

Attached is a list of observations reported by visitors and staff for the period September 1 - November 30. I've compiled only those observations for species which are listed as **Rare, Accidental, Hypothetical** or **Not included** (?) on the park's checklist. A **"?-fall"** indicates a species on the checklist but not for the fall season.

As you can see from the list, it has been a relatively quiet fall season with regard to unexpected or unusual species. The prolonged dry spell was broken, at least for a short period in mid-September, when The Chisos Basin had a 3.5 inch deluge in a 24 hour period! Down below at Panther Junction the same period saw 1.35 inches fall. By the end of the month the Basin gauge had recorded a total of 6 inches and Panther Junction had 1.9 inches. Elsewhere in the park however, it remained very dry with only a few isolated rainfalls. Through October and November, dry conditions returned with only the Rio Grande Village rain gauge recording more than an inch of precipitation for the month (November). The first major cold snap to hit the park occurred in late November for a period of several days. There were no discernable movements of birds associated with this frontal system with the exception of **red-breasted nuthatch** ahead of the frontal passage and **golden-crowned kinglet** and **brown creeper** behind it. (All are sporadically occurring species here whose appearance is often tied to such frontal systems).

Perhaps the oddest bird to appear is a **ringed turtle-dove** that showed up on November 6 at a Panther Junction residence and has continued in the housing area into December. The bird has no bands but is obviously an escape or feral. To date it is doing well and is often observed in the company of mourning and white-winged doves. (Greg Lasley suggested that we check out the possibility of Eurasian collared dove, a bird I am not familiar with but which is apparently showing up in the U.S....The dove here is definitely a ringed turtle-dove.)

A very nice sight these fall-coming-into-winter days are the **Anna's hummingbirds** that are seen occasionally at blooming tree tobaccos and other flowering plants. There have been reports from outside the park (Terlingua Ranch area) of lingering **broad-tailed** and **rufous hummingbirds** at feeders - fide Bill Bourbon.

One intriguing report that came in was of an **elegant trogon\*** on the Window Trail on November 28. The report unfortunately contained no details, nor even the name and phone number of the reporting party. There have been no other reported observations. This observation is very questionable and remains unconfirmed. The last accepted sighting (TBRC) for the park was in 1993.

\* Accepted by TBRC see winter96/summer96 reports

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Lesser Scaup	2	11/05	Cottonwood Camp.	B.Bourbon/Flippo		rare
Sharp-shinned hawk	1	10/09	Window Trail	M.Gionet/T.Tyson		?-fall
	1	11/04	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo		?-fall
Wild turkey	1	10/29	Grapevine Hills	A & J Lindberg		?-fall
Ringed Turtle-dove	1	11/06-30	Panther Junction	many obs.		feral/escape
Anna's hummingbird	1	11/14-17	Panther Junction	Mark Flippo		rare
Green kingfisher	1	9/22	Rio Grande Vill.	Lakes/Flippo		rare
	1	10/24	Rio Grande Vill.	B.Duplisea		rare
	1	11/22	Rio Grande Vill.	Frank Fitch		rare
	1	11/26	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo		rare
Red-headed woodpecker	1	10/14	Dugout Wells	K. Plunkett		acc.
Red-breasted nuthatch	1	11/05	Laguna Meadow	Valerie Naylor		spo.
Brown creeper	2	11/11	Pine Canyon	C. Stigale		spo.
Carolina wren	1	9/03	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo		rare
	1	10/13	Rio Grande Vill.	Mark Flippo		rare
Golden-crowned kinglet	1	11/23	Dog Canyon	Valerie Naylor		spo.
	1	11/24	Panther Junction	Sarah Bourbon		spo.
Grace's warbler	1	10/01	Window Trail	H. Elms		rare
Scarlet Tanager	1	9/17	Sam Nail Ranch	Steve Lewis		?-fall
Lazuli Bunting	1	9/06	Rio Grande Vill.	D. Ohl		rare

\*Review species; report sent to TBRC:Lasley

